Rural District Council

OF

CRANBROOK.

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR

1898,

BY

JAMES SCOTT TEW, M.D., D.P.H.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

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Annual Report on the Health of the Cranbrook Rural Sanitary District in 1898.

CENSUS 1881.		CENSUS 1891.	
No. of Acres.....	41,436	No. of Acres.....	41,436
Inhabited Houses .	2,754	Inhabited Houses .	2,787
Population	13,773	Population	13,730

The **Population** of the Cranbrook Rural District was estimated by the method adopted by the Registrar-General to be **13,708** at the middle of 1898, showing a slight decrease (3) since the middle of 1897.

The number of registered births amounted to 291, including 122 of males and 169 of females. The **Birth-rate** was **21·2** per 1,000 of population as compared with 24·0 and 21·8 in the two previous years.

One hundred and eighty deaths were returned, which consisted of 95 of males and 85 of females and giving a **Death-rate** of **13·1** per 1,000 of population as against 12·7 in 1897 and 10·7 in 1896.

The **Infant Mortality,** *i.e.*, the number of deaths of infants under one year of age per 1,000 registered births was **65,** as compared with 103 in the previous year and 80 in 1896.

Of the total 180 deaths only **one** was caused by one of the seven principal Zymotic Diseases, viz. :—by Puerperal Fever, and the **Zymotic Death-rate** consequently shows the exceedingly low figure of **·07** per 1,000 of population, as against 0·9 in 1897 and 0·3 in 1896.

During the year 1898 the birth-rate throughout England and Wales was 29·4; the general death-rate was 17·6 and the Zymotic death-rate 2·2 per 1,000 of population.

The rate of mortality amongst infants under one year of age per 1,000 registered births was 161.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.

Under the provisions of the Infectious Disease (Notification) Act, 1889, 149 cases were reported, viz.:—109 cases of Scarlet Fever, 19 of Diphtheria, 2 of Enteric Fever, 1 of Puerperal Fever and 18 of Erysipelas.

Scarlet Fever.—The 109 cases of this disease were distributed through the year as follows:—

January	no cases.	September	1
February	no cases.	October	12
March	1	November	9
April	7	December	18
May	39		
June	9	Total	109 cases.
July	10		
August	3		

Each parish of the District contributed the following numbers:—

Cranbrook	56 cases.
Hawkhurst	37 ,,
Benenden	11 ,,
Goudhurst	3 ,,
Frittenden	1 case.
Sandhurst	1 ,,
Total	109 cases.

The above-mentioned cases in the parish of Cranbrook all occurred at Sissinghurst—none occurred actually in Cranbrook itself.

The epidemic in this locality commenced at the end of April and the infection spread rapidly amongst the school children. Close investigation showed that this was undoubtedly due to gross negligence on the part of many of the parents, who allowed their children to mix with others when in an infectious state.

A considerable number of the cases were very slight, and, no medical attendant being called in, the parents pleaded ignorance of the disease ever having been present, even when desquamation subsequently occurred.

The condition of things necessitated a number of visits of inspection, both on my part and that of the Sanitary Inspector.

The village school was closed from April 30th to June 27th. It was found desirable to distribute leaflets amongst the occupiers of infected houses, setting forth the penalty and the risk they were incurring by not taking the necessary precautions to arrest the spread of the disease.

Nine cases reported from Benenden were all confined to one block of cottages; 6 cases occurred in one cottage and the remaining 3 in one other family.

At the end of November Scarlet Fever became prevalent at Hawkhurst and the disease was in this instance also spread by personal infection.

In spite of the great number of cases of Scarlet Fever it is satisfactory to report that not a single death occurred, the disease having fortunately assumed a mild form, and was mostly confined to children under 15 years of age. The following shows the age-periods of the cases :—

0—1 year.	1—5 years.	5—15 years.	15—25 years.	25—65 years.	
1	24	77	3	4	= 109 cases.

Diphtheria.—Nineteen cases were notified, 14 of which occurred in the parish of Hawkhurst, 2 in Cranbrook, 1 in Goudhurst and 2 in Sandhurst.

None of the 19 cases ended fatally and they occurred at the following age-periods :—

1—5 years.	5—15 years.	15—25 years.	25—65 years.	
4	9	2	4	= 19 cases.

Thirteen of the 14 cases reported from Hawkhurst occurred at Dr. Barnardo's Home (Babies' Castle).

I visited the Home on many occasions and had three consultations with Dr. Barnardo, Dr. Dundas Grant, Dr. Milne and Dr. Long.

The drainage was overhauled, and, although nothing was found in a really defective state, a large part was re-laid on more modern lines; the water was examined; the milk supply was known to be beyond suspicion, and, in fact, all the likely means of transmission were enquired into. It was eventually got rid of by gradually drafting each child into a different building after at least two, and usually three, bacteriological examinations of the throat excretion had been made to make sure as far as possible of the absence of diphtheria bacilli.

The patients were isolated and treated in the best manner possible and although several were typically severe cases of true diphtheria, none of the patients succumbed to the disease and no infection was conveyed to the adjoining neighbourhood.

The only case occurring in the parish outside the Home was at Back Road, Hawkhurst, in the month of May and had no connection with the above cases.

Enteric Fever.—The only two cases of this disease which occurred in the District both recovered.

The first case was that of a girl aged 15 years at Goudhurst, in August; the second, that of a young man at Hawkhurst, in November. The sanitary condition of both houses was fairly good and the presence of the disease could not be ascribed to existing defects.

In the latter case the patient had been out of the District some fortnight before, but no actual evidence of the source of infection could be obtained.

Puerperal Fever.—The 1 case of puerperal fever notified from Goudhurst died on November 27th.

Erysipelas.—Eighteen cases occurred—10 in Cranbrook parish, 5 in Goudhurst and 3 in Frittenden.

Two fatalities occurred, 1 at Cranbrook and 1 at Frittenden; both persons were adults past middle life.

The cases and deaths occurred at the following age-periods:

5—15 years.	15—25 years.	25—65 years.	65 years and upwards.	
1	1	14	2	= 18 cases.
		2		= 2 deaths.

NON-NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.

It is very satisfactory to report that no deaths were caused by either measles, whooping-cough, or diarrhœa.

Influenza was somewhat prevalent, 9 deaths resulting from this disease. One occurred in Benenden, 3 in Cranbrook, 4 in Hawkhurst, and 1 in Sandhurst. They all occurred in the early part of the year; 6 of the patients were over 65 years of age, 2 between 25 and 65, and 1 was an infant under 1 year of age.

INSPECTIONS.

During the past year an abnormally large number of inspections have been necessary, not only for investigating the surroundings of infectious disease, but also on account of existing nuisances, mainly caused by house drainage improperly disposed of.

The condition of one of the bakehouses in Cranbrook has been very much improved by disconnection of the drain pipes from the interior of outbuildings adjoining the bakery, and by improving the ventilation.

It has not been found necessary to take any action in the case of slaughter-houses or dairies—all those inspected during the year having been found in a fairly sanitary condition.

The registration of dairies is kept up and each new building registered is examined to ascertain if it is in a satisfactory condition.

Six reports were presented to the District Council on scarlet fever at Sissinghurst (3), Goudhurst, Kilndown, and Hawkhurst, and 2 on diphtheria occurring at Babies' Castle in additiont o a general report in January, and a report on the sewage disposal nuisances complained of in September and October.

REFUSE DISPOSAL.

Little difficulty is really experienced in the disposal of house refuse, as the country round all the more populous places is purely of an agricultural character.

All the refuse is removed by private owners or occupiers, but attention of many has to be constantly called by the Sanitary Inspector to collections of unwholesome refuse in close proximity to dwelling houses.

In Cranbrook a soil cart is employed by the Council for emptying a certain number of the cesspools; this has been found to be of considerable advantage, and as the work is done at night no perceptible inconvenience is caused.

DRAINAGE.

On numerous occasions during the year I have inspected the different sewage outfalls; these are in the worst possible condition, entirely untreated sewage passing into the streams at several points.

The owners of land specially made complaints of nuisances caused by sewage, and the District Council, realising that these must be dealt with and in accordance with recommendations in a Report, which I presented on October 3rd, instructed Messrs. Sands & Walker, Engineers of Nottingham, to visit and inspect the condition of sewage disposal and to prepare a report on a sewerage scheme applicable to the parish of Hawkhurst.

I accompanied Mr. Sands with seven members of the Hawkhurst Parish Council over the ground and different outfalls in the parish on December 16th, and at the end of the year the Engineer's Report was in a fair way of being completed early in January, 1899.

A number of houses in Hawkhurst have been re-drained, where the existing arrangements were found to be defective and there are many more which will also require attention in the near future.

WATER SUPPLY.

The Cranbrook District Water Company's Bill came before the Parliamentary Committee in May last, and the Company were successful in acquiring water rights over the parishes of Benenden, Frittenden and Sandhurst, in addition to those already possessed over the parishes of Cranbrook, Hawkhurst and Goudhurst.

The supply is now available in Hawkhurst and Cranbrook, and mains are being laid in Goudhurst and other parts.

The Town Council of Tenterden having obtained the insertion of a clause by which the Company agreed to have water available for use in the Borough within 18 months from the time of the passing of the Bill, the laying of the mains has been rapidly proceeded with in that direction through Benenden to the outskirts of the Cranbrook District towards Rolvenden.

ISOLATION.

It is quite impossible to obtain anything like efficient isolation in cottages with only 2 or 3 bedrooms, but every effort has been made to limit the spread of disease as much as possible and the rooms in which the patients were treated have been systematically cleansed and fumigated.

In several instances most laudable individual efforts have been made by private individuals at considerable trouble and expense to isolate patients under their charge by taking empty cottages for the purpose when available. This has notably occurred at Hawkhurst, and a small shopkeeper in the parish of Benenden, at the suggestion of the medical attendant, caused one of the family attacked by Scarlet Fever, to be removed to a neighbouring empty cottage for several weeks with the best results as no further cases arose in that locality.

There is no Isolation Hospital in the District.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

The following elementary schools were closed by my advice on account of the prevalence of Influenza and Scarlet Fever:—

Benenden Schools—Influenza—January 31st to February 14th.

Sissinghurst School—Scarlet Fever—April 30th to June 27th.

National Schools, Cranbrook—Measles—July 28th to August 28th.

Infants' School, Highgate, Hawkhurst—Scarlet Fever—December 5th to December 23rd.

Sir Thomas Dunk's Endowed School, Hawkhurst—Scarlet Fever—December 5th to December 23rd.

OVERCROWDING.

Three cases of overcrowding have come to my notice during the year—2 of these were in Cranbrook and 1 in Hawkhurst; both were remedied by verbal instructions from the Sanitary Inspector.

Three dilapidated cottages in Hawkhurst were voluntarily demolished by the owner.

No action has been taken by this Council under the Housing of the Working Classes Act, nor do I consider any action necessary or desirable at the present time; neither have any of the other more recent adoptive acts been put into force other than the Infectious Disease (Notification) Act, 1889.

Mr. Collins' Report of work done during the year, the customary Tables and Vital Statistics are appended.

I have the honour to be, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

March 3rd, 1899. JAMES SCOTT TEW.

WORK CARRIED OUT BY MR. COLLINS DURING THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER, 1898.

Main and Branch drains laid and repaired, &c.	82
Cesspool nuisances abated	64
Slaughter-houses inspected at different times	14
Lodging-houses inspected	3
Pig pound nuisances abated	25
Manure, rubbish, and open ditch nuisances abated, &c. ..	44
New privies and water-closets built	46
Privies repaired, &c.	49
Houses unfit for human habitation	6
Cow sheds and premises inspected	24
Farmers' hop-pickers' accommodation inspected	32
Wells of water cleaned out and repaired, &c.	40
Notices served	24

TABLE I.

The number of deaths from all causes and from the seven principal Zymotic Diseases, with their Death-rates; the principal causes of Death, and the Infant Mortality, in the Cranbrook Rural District in each Quarter of 1898.

QUARTERS.	Total Deaths.	Death-rate per 1000	Deaths from Seven principal Zymotic Diseases.	Zymotic Death-rate.	Small-pox.	Scarlet Fever.	Diphtheria.	Enteric Fever.	Puerperal Fever.	Erysipelas.	Measles.	Whooping-cough.	Diarrhœa.	Rheumatic Fever.	Phthisis.	Bronchitis, Pneumonia	Pleurisy,	Heart Disease.	Influenza.	Injuries.	All Other Diseases.	Deaths of Infants under one year per 1,000 Births
1st ..	62	18·0	0	0·0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	16	..	5	9	..	29	76
2nd ..	27	7·8	0	0·0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	7	..	3	..	1	14	216
3rd ..	44	12·8	0	0·0	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	1	3	5	..	6	..	1	26	14
4th ..	47	13·7	1	0·2	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	7	..	2	..	..	36	55
Totals .	180	13·1	1	·07	..	..	..	..	1	2	..	..	..	2	8	35	..	16	9	2	105	65

TABLE II.

Death from Zymotic Diseases during the past ten years, and in 1898.

Zymotic Diseases.	1888.	1889.	1890.	1891.	1892.	1893.	1894.	1895.	1896.	1897.	Average of ten years.	1898.
Small-pox	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0·0	0
Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	1	1	2	..	..	1	..	0·5	0
Diptheria	1	1	..	..	1	10	1	2	..	..	1·6	0
Fevers.....	1	2	..	1	..	3	1	..	..	4	1·2	1
Measles	..	..	3	..	1	7	..	..	3	..	1·4	0
Whooping-cough..	1	2	9	1	..	4	1	6	1	5	3·0	0
Diarrhœa	1	4	2	1	1	5	1	1	..	4	2·0	0
Total Zymotics....	4	9	14	4	4	31	4	9	5	13	9·7	1
Other Zymotics....	1	1	6	4	12	12	12	5	6	4	6·3	11
Totals.....	5	10	20	8	16	43	16	14	11	17	16·0	12

TABLE III.

The number of Deaths from all causes and from the seven principal Zymotic Diseases with their Death-rates in each Parish of the Cranbrook Rural District in the year 1898.

Parishes.	Census Population 1891.	Total Deaths.	Death-Rate. per 1000.	Deaths from 7 principal Zymotic Diseases.	Zymotic Death-Rate.
Frittenden	974	8	7·9	0	0·0
Hawkhurst	3274	30	9·0	0	0·0
Benenden	1596	13	10·6	0	0·0
Goudhurst	2734	41	15·5	1	0·3
Cranbrook	4046	70	17·5	0	0·0
Sandhurst	1106	18	20·7	0	0·0

Table of Deaths during the Year 1898, in the Cranbrook Rural Sanitary District, classified according to Diseases, Ages, and Localities.

Names of Localities adopted for the purpose of these Statistics; public institutions being shown as separate localities.	Mortality from all Causes, at subjoined Ages.								Mortality from subjoined causes, distinguishing Deaths of Children under 5 years of age.									
	At all ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and upwards.		Puerperal.	Erysipelas.	Rheumatic Fever	Phthisis.	Bronchitis, Pneumonia and Pleurisy.	Heart Disease.	Influenza.	Injuries.	All Other Diseases.	Total.
Benenden	13	2	..	1	..	6	4	Under 5.	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	2
								5 upwards.	..	..	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	11
Cranbrook	70	5	1	1	4	18	41	Under 5.	..	..	..	..	2	..	1	..	3	6
								5 upwards.	..	1	..	3	10	5	2	1	42	64
Goudhurst	41	8	5	1	2	12	13	Under 5.	..	..	..	..	5	..	..	..	8	13
								5 upwards.	1	..	..	2	5	4	..	..	16	28
Frittenden	8	2	..	..	1	3	2	Under 5.	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	2
								5 upwards.	..	1	..	..	2	..	..	..	3	6
Hawkhurst	30	1	3	3	1	6	16	Under 5.	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	2	4
								5 upwards.	..	..	..	..	3	4	4	..	15	26
Sandhurst	18	1	1	..	2	3	11	Under 5.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	2
								5 upwards.	..	..	1	2	3	2	1	..	7	16
Total	180	19	10	6	10	48	87	Under 5.	..	..	..	..	11	..	1	..	17	29
								5 upwards.	1	2	2	8	24	16	8	2	88	151

Table of Population, Births, and of New Cases of Infectious Sickness, coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health, during the year 1898, in the Cranbrook Rural Sanitary District; classified according to Diseases, Ages and Localities.

Names of Localities adopted for the purpose of these Statistics; public institutions being shown as separate localities.	Population at all Ages.		Registered Births.	Aged under 5 or over 5.	New cases of Sickness in each locality coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health.				
	Last Census.	Estimated to middle of 1898.			Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Enteric or Typhoid Fever.	Puerperal Fever.	Erysipelas.
Benenden.....	1596	1589	..	Under 5.	2	..	..	..	..
				5 upwds.	9	..	..	..	..
Cranbrook	4046	3927	..	Under 5.	10	..	..	..	..
				5 upwds.	46	2	..	..	10
Goudhurst	2734	2707	..	Under 5.	1	..	..	..	..
				5 upwds.	2	1	1	1	5
Frittenden	974	1008	..	Under 5.	..	..	..	..	..
				5 upwds.	1	..	..	..	3
Hawkhurst	3274	3416	..	Under 5.	12	4	..	..	..
				5 upwds.	25	10	1	..	..
Sandhurst	1106	1061	..	Under 5.	..	..	..	..	..
				5 upwds.	1	2	..	..	..
Totals	13730	13708	291	Under 5.	25	4	..	..	..
				5 upwds.	84	15	2	1	18